

City of Aberdeen
Business Meeting, Work Session
July 21, 2014

Present: Mayor Bennett, Councilwoman Elliott, Councilman Garner,
Councilwoman Landbeck, and Councilwoman Young

Absent: None

Also Present: Douglas Miller, City Manager
Monica Correll, City Clerk
Doris Manner, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers by Mayor Bennett.

Matters of Immediate and Urgent Business

- a. Ordinance No. 14-O-15, Repealing Registration for Bicycles (For Introduction)

Mayor Bennett introduced Ordinance No. 14-O-15, Repealing Registration for Bicycles.

- b. Ordinance No, 14-O-16, Revision of the Code, Chapter 190, Alarms (For Introduction)

Mayor Bennett introduced Ordinance No, 14-O-16, Revision of the Code, Chapter 190, Alarms.

- c. Resolution No. 14-R-12, Sustainable Maryland Certified Municipal Certification
(For Introduction and Adoption)

Mayor Bennett introduced Resolution No. 14-R-12, Sustainable Maryland Certified Municipal Certification.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Landbeck and seconded by Councilwoman Young to approve Resolution No. 14-R-12, Sustainable Maryland Certified Municipal Certification.

The motion was passed with a vote of 5 – yes.

Work Session (4:21 p.m.)

- a. Planning Commission Recommendations on IBD Amendments: The Planning Commission Integrated Business District (IBD) amendments will be finished in September per Mr. Miller.
- b. Retreat Visions: The Novak Consulting Group under the direction of Catherine Tuck Parrish conducted a two-day retreat with the Council March 14 and 15, 2014. The following was a summary of the retreat discussions.

Retreat Goals

- Strengthen the working relationships between and among members of the governing body.
- Develop a vision and critical success factors for the City.
- Identify goals for 2014-2016 to move the City closer to its vision.

Strengths of the City

- Good people.
- Proactive, effective communication.
- Interaction and communication between departments.
- The cooperation of most of the Council members.
- Professionalism of public officials.
- Commitment to public service.
- Foster strong intragovernmental, organizational goodwill and interaction.
- Employee dedication and loyalty.
- The City's financial position.
- Integrity of public officials.
- Constructive attitudes and beliefs.
- A City Council that works well together.
- The transparency of the City's government and operations.
- Responsible fiscal government control.

Weaknesses of the City

- Customer service needs to be improved.
- Technology development, upgrades, and maintenance.
- Customer service (internal and external), currently being addressed.
- Communication is weak with City employees.
- Perception of business-friendly City needs to be improved.
- Lack of resources due to stale economy and government cutbacks.
- Unity in the community it represents.
- Infrastructure deterioration.
- Need more community involvement.
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Community Opportunities

- TOD potential development.
- City community programs.
- The transparency of the City's operations.
- Stronger role in Council actions/meetings.
- APG expansion.
- Opportunities on APG.
- Support community functions and events.
- Open communication with availability with City officials.
- Support community policing events.

Challenges Facing the Community

- Flat revenues.
- Economic development.
- Revitalization of downtown.
- Decaying infrastructure.
- Growth and redevelopment efforts.
- Stagnation of military funding.
- Deteriorating infrastructure.
- Housing shortage in City limits.
- Unnecessary/uninformed political instigations or referenda.
- Transportation improvements on MD Route 22/U.S. Route 40.
- Increased traffic to and from outside developments.
- Growth at APG or future BRACs.

Vision Statement

Aberdeen is a safe, progressive community with a revitalized downtown, full of locally-owned restaurants, unique shops, and entertainment choices that visitors and residents can reach by walking or convenient parking. The City manages its growth with excellent planning while maintaining a small town atmosphere where people want to live, meet friends, relax and adopt as their hometown.

Critical Success Factors and Mayor and Council Priorities for 2014-2015

- Vital Downtown
 - Station Square/Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
 - Economic Development
 - Downtown Association
 - Incentives Core (CSX to Station Square)
- Engaged Citizens
 - Input through Surveys
 - Sustainable Maryland
- Visionary Leadership
 - Disaster Planning/Recovery
- Safe and Reliable City Services
- Financial Security or Soundness
- Healthy Transportation Corridors

Council discussion followed. Mr. Miller will discuss the retreat results with the City staff.

c. Comcast Franchise Agreement; Needs Assessment

Comcast requires a needs assessment in order to renew their franchise agreement with the City. A public hearing will be held.

d. Building Permit Assessment

For the last fiscal year, total building permits were up 15%; residential permits were up 21%; commercial permits were down in number but valuation was up; total construction value went up, both residential and commercial construction values were up as well. Most of the increase in residential was due to applications for solar panels on houses.

e. Ripken World Series Parade

The Mayor invited everyone to attend the Cal Ripken World Series Parade on August 9th at 10:00 a.m. in downtown Aberdeen. There will be eighteen teams from various states and countries who will be participating in the World Series held at Cal Sr.'s Yard. The Vi Ripken Field will be dedicated on August 11 at 3:00 p.m.

f. Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) Water and Sewer Update

Mr. Miller updated the Council that the City owns and operates the water and sewer systems on APG. The water currently comes from Harford County or the Chapel Hill Water Treatment Plant. The goal of the Army is to decommission the Chapel Hill Plant and convert to using the Building 250 site (another water treatment plant). The City has provided a water tower to provide the storage necessary for the conversion. The City is also in the process of upgrading the APG plant to Enhanced Nutrient Technology (ENR). Withdrawal permits are being updated and public hearings will be held. The last project involves work on the wells, at Building 250, in order to make it operational.

g. APG/ Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment (SPEA)

The City has been alerted by the Army Alliance, following the Army's published SPEA, about a potential realignment for a reduction in troop strength from 570,000 to 190,000 by the year 2020. In Maryland, this will affect Fort Meade and APG with a reduction of 4,300 positions at APG (1,000 military and 3,300 civilians). The Mayor said that this is viewed as a budgetary exercise and the Army Alliance advises us in order to properly plan.

Other Business

- The Mayor said he attended a promotional ceremony for Brigadier General Bruce T. Crawford who was promoted to Major General. General Dennis L. Via (4-star) presided over the ceremony which was attended by many dignitaries and guests.

- The Council discussed the properties in disrepair located on Route 22, near the City's entrance. The process to rectify the situation was underway.
- As a point of clarification, Councilwoman Young said that the City of Aberdeen was responsible for the water and sewer on APG North (Aberdeen area) and not on APG South (Edgewood area).
- The Phase II process has started on the Regional Water and Sewer Authority concept proposed by Harford County Executive David Craig. The Technical Advisory Group that supports the Advisory Committee in their deliberations is currently conducting meetings.

Announcements

July 28; Council Meeting

August 4; Council Work Session

August 8-17; World Series

August 9; World Series Parade

August 11; Vi Ripken Field Dedication

Adjournment

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.